

2001-Hollyhock-Retreat-03 - The Next Step of Evolution is to Transcend Thought - Hollyhock Retreat 2001- 352x256 - 3 of 5

[Speaker 1] (3:24 - 1:26:37)

I was asked once, what's your greatest achievement? What do you consider your greatest achievement in life? And what came up was, I don't need to think all the time.

That's really it. Doesn't sound like a big thing. And it wouldn't get me a job, probably.

I haven't yet seen an ad in the paper looking for someone who doesn't think. Now, generally, society, when it talks of somebody who doesn't think, or the word thoughtless is considered very negative. And according to popular belief, the world is full of people who are thoughtless, who don't think for themselves.

Well, maybe they don't think for themselves. There's hardly anybody who thinks for themselves. Thought is collective.

So nobody really thinks for themselves. But they're all thinking. Of course, thought still happens.

Words wouldn't come out of my mouth. They require thought. Thought puts the words together.

But you saw yesterday, when I couldn't remember what I had said, because what I say doesn't come out of accumulated knowledge. The difference in the frequency between something that was just repeated from memory, which is normally how thought operates, and something that comes really out of the state of no thought. And even that can become thought.

It can become inspired thought, creative thought. And at other times, it doesn't become thought. It just remains the state of thoughtless awareness.

And if I were just talking about myself, it wouldn't be very interesting. But that state of thoughtless awareness is an aspect of what we're talking about. It's a different perspective on it.

We talked about not taking the mind too seriously, thought activity. That already implies that there is another dimension from where you are able not to take the mind too seriously. So even if you can not take your mind and your thoughts so seriously, it implies already that the dimension of thoughtless awareness is there in you, if only sporadically.

Maybe it's covered up by thought identification a lot of the time, but it's there. And there

are times when you can not take your mind too seriously. To give every experience space.

Now, another perspective on that. Also, it implies the ability to have... What is that space?

What does it mean to give every experience that happens? Of course, in the now, the only place where it can happen. What does it mean to give it space?

What is that space? It's the space of no thought around it, in which it happens. It is known, but not known through concepts and labels.

What else did we talk about the first evening? The not needing, psychologically not needing always the next moment as virtually an obsession. Not needing the future psychologically.

Needing it on a practical level, because that's how it operates quite well. But not desperately needing it. That also implies that you're able to step out of thought, because thought operates within past and future.

So intelligence is usually defined as the ability to think, perhaps to think quickly, to be able to accumulate a lot of information, to be able to dissect and analyze this information. But there's never anything creative there. If that is intelligence, a day will come when computers will be able to do that better than humans.

In some ways, they're already doing certain things better than humans. There was a computer who defeated the world chess champion. That's a limited activity, of course.

But what is true intelligence, it comes out of the ability to step into no thought, and then perhaps be able to use thought creatively. Not in a self-serving way, looking for your sense of self in and through thought. That's why thought is so compulsive.

It's to keep oneself going, to keep one's sense of identity going. And every one of you, in every one of you, that dimension is already arising, even if you don't know it. Because the mind cannot recognize something that is beyond the mind.

And I've been with people who tell me, I'm never present, I don't know, it just doesn't seem to work for me. And I know they are present, not continuously, but I've seen them being present. And I reminded them, oh, yeah, that's true.

But the mind doesn't see it. So it's, the next step in human evolution is to transcend thought. Because thought has become self-serving and quite destructive.

The amplification of thought as science and technology also, although intrinsically neither good nor bad, has become quite destructive, because thought is not linked to a deeper dimension of being, of awareness. To transcend thought means not to leave it

behind completely. Transcend this, you go beyond it.

But something that you transcend, you still, it's still there, it's still incorporated, but gone beyond, not confined anymore to that. That's the most amazing thing, that a species is actually going, reaching a different stage in evolution, almost like one could say a new species growing out of a thought- species. And a new species comes when things get difficult, when the dimension, one dimension, doesn't work anymore.

They say that life first developed in the sea. At some point, sea creatures started to crawl on land. Why wouldn't they have done that?

Because the only reason can be that they had to. There must have been a huge area of sea that got cut off from the rest, and water became less and less over a long period of time. So they were forced, their habitat didn't work anymore.

And so even now there are some creatures that can only just crawl on land, and then they are happy to get back in the sea. So there must have, something forced them out of that, and they started, and then they said, let's get back into the water. And that's those humans who are going through this transformation that's a bit like that.

The old familiar world of me and my problems. But humanity as a whole, collectively, that state of thought identification really cannot be sustained very much longer, because it inflicts too much damage and suffering on other life forms on the planet. It also inflicts too much suffering on each human who is trapped in that, not to speak of this incredible violence and suffering that humans inflict on others out of their ignorance, not knowing who they are.

Not necessarily ignorance in the sense of non-educated. They're highly educated people, totally unconscious. Well, most of them.

Which simply means identified completely with their mind, which is the meaning of unconscious, spiritually speaking. So that state of consciousness that has dominated humanity for so long has had its place. It's a stage in evolution.

It had, humans had to go through it. But when an evolutionary stage reaches its end, it becomes always very critical. The transition is critical.

Are they going to make it or not? And probably not every species who reaches the point of transition from one state of consciousness or way of, one dimension of existence to another, makes it. Perhaps some species reach the point where the transition becomes necessary, not just possible, but necessary, and yet never go beyond it.

And then the species dissolves. There have been species on the planet that didn't survive as species. Something happened.

And who knows how many species have had already reached to the point that we are at now and perhaps didn't make it. No point in speculating to take us into mind. The mind says, oh, I want to hear more about that.

And then the mind says, are we going to make it? Well, all I know is we are here now. Here we are.

That's a good sign. I also know that there's an enormous response to this, the transformation in consciousness, that I couldn't possibly have, I knew there was transformation of consciousness happening. I knew what comes through this form is the transformation of consciousness.

But that it happened, there's such an enormous response. I'm amazed by that. So it is happening.

We don't need to ask ourselves if humans are going to make it or not. It's enough to really, you are humanity. What does it mean to make it?

Well, it's the transition from one state of consciousness to another. But it's not in the future, because that's the old state of consciousness. To believe that this change is going to happen to you is still the old mindset of thought and future-dominated thought.

So that's the key, because the danger is that when one speaks of it, the old consciousness gets hold of that and uses it and obscures the truth that is there, and makes it into something that it can deal with and understand on its own level. And so the truth teachings, traditionally, that's happened to them, always, they became religions. And what that means is, the mind got in there and interpreted and therefore obscured the truth inherent in the original teachings, and made it into mind stuff.

And so a huge superstructure of mental stuff develops on top of the original message, because the message of the transformation of consciousness for the first time came 3,000 years ago, or even earlier that we don't know anymore, have no historical record. The Buddha pointed to it, one of the first flowerings of that transformation. The message of the Buddha is, the end of suffering is possible now.

And then even Buddhism became heavily burdened with mind stuff. Christianity even more so. But this is less likely now, there's an added energy to the same basic message, but there's an added energy to it.

And a new, a language that is not burdened, although all language is inadequate, but a language that is relatively neutral, and it doesn't lend itself easily into becoming converted to religion. I believe in the now. And you better believe it too.

We built a cathedral to the now. And I'm sure somebody one day will call it that. The mind will get in there, and then it says, okay, I've classified it, I've dealt with it, that's

where it belongs.

Nowism, remotely related to existentialism, and influenced by other non-dualistic teachings. Okay, that's all right. What's the next thing?

Priests of now. Strange thing is, I believe yesterday in the restaurant, they had the Japanese flute music, which I gave them to play for you while you were silent. And traditionally, those were played, it's just a bamboo, hollow bamboo with a few holes in, but for hundreds of years, that's been played.

Traditionally, by the flute players were big straw hats that would hide their faces. And they were called priests of nothingness. So it is more difficult now for the mind, it can, it will still attempt to get in there and make it into mind stuff.

But the message is so clear, it's much harder now to get drawn back into, to make mind stuff out of it. It'll happen here and there, but not on a large scale. So you can catch yourself when no thought arises.

And this is a strange thing, to know that you are in a state of no thought. This is, I'm almost like saying, don't think of an elephant. To know that you are in a state of no thought, that state knows itself as no thought, but no language.

Just this. And you can often encounter it when you look at something natural in nature. And sometimes for the first moment, you just look at something new.

There's that space and there's an inner response. That's the space around the perception. Then the question is, how long does it take before the mind says something about it?

Or maybe the mind doesn't say anything about it at all, it says something about the stock market, or whatever the mind is concerned with. So don't become critical and say, okay, self-conscious. Just allow, be aware of that state of pure awareness when it's there.

And then you suddenly recognize it, because in many humans it is arising, but they don't recognize it. They don't recognize it's arising anyway, but also it can become obscured more easily again by the mind, because you don't recognize that either, that process by which the mind obscures it again very quickly. What happened to me when this sudden transformation happened from a state of mind identification to a state of clarity and alertness and peace, which is the state of no thought, and such a sudden transition is relatively rare.

For most humans it is a gradual, but just like the animals crawling, sea creatures crawling, and then back in the water, okay, I have to get out. And then for most it's gradual. For me it was sudden, but I didn't know anything about it.

And I was walking around the city after it happened and looking, and the mind occasionally said, why does everything is so peaceful? It's just really weird. Even the buses and all the, it was in the middle of London, the taxis, the crowds of people, everything that is this undercurrent of peace, it's like, where's it come?

I don't know. I didn't know at that time that there was actually very little thought. Occasionally thoughts came, how could everything be so peaceful?

That's a thought. And then, of course, there was no answer. But I was walking around in a state of simple awareness.

But it didn't yet recognize itself as awareness. All I knew it was peace. And much later I realized, oh, it's actually thought has been reduced by 80% or 90%.

And that recognition came much later. In fact, probably came the first time I listened to a Zen monk who defined Zenness, not thinking. That's when I was searching for some kind of understanding of what had happened to me.

And I went to see these people, and there was a Zen monk who said, all that Zen is, is no thought. And I immediately recognized he had just explained something to me. And there were others in the room who scratched their heads and said, what does he mean, no thought?

Because no thought, that state is hard to understand through thought. People have gone and studied Zen for years, trying to figure it out. And the famous philosopher and writer Arthur Koestler, who wrote wonderful books, one day he decided to study Zen and write a book about it.

He traveled to Japan, spent a few months with Zen teachers in monasteries. And he had a highly developed mind, enormous knowledge in arts and sciences. One of the last people, perhaps, very early knowledgeable in arts and sciences.

Vast amount of knowledge. But he tried to understand Zen through his knowledge. And after a few months, he wrote a book about it and came to the conclusion that it was all nonsense.

Which is the very thing that Zen actually teaches, they would agree. It doesn't make sense to the mind. The very point of Zen is to destroy addiction to the mind, compulsive thought, to take you beyond that.

And the first to agree that Zen is nonsense would be the Zen master. Of course it is. His other books are more interesting to read.

He wrote a book about creativity also, which he did recognize by interviewing people that thought is only one small aspect of creativity. The ability to step back from thought.

So the gap that arises in you of no thought, be aware of it.

Now that awareness can easily become transformed into also thought. And then the mind says, that's it, I'm there. Okay, that happens, but it was there before the mind came in.

And then you become familiar with a state of knowing that awareness, not through concepts or labels. That is so beautiful, it's like you've come home to yourself, one could say. To know that spaciousness that is so much faster than thought, not separate from it, but so much faster.

In which thought can still operate much better, much more effectively, and not creating problems. Because to a large extent, thought as it is now, is a problem maker, a trouble maker. Everything that thought creates, creates further problems.

Anything that thought creates, that is not thought, not linked to the deeper dimension of being or awareness. Every medicine, every piece of technology, all the side effects, every insecticide, whatever thought creates, has an enormous downside. And a norm creates more problems than it tries to solve.

And this is really what the East calls karmic action, it is karma. And something that comes from a deeper level, is created out of the depths of, comes because thought is linked into the dimension of stillness or awareness, it is possible for something to come into being that has no karmic repercussions. Just as, I may suggest just, for example, something like homeopathy, something that, I don't know if anybody really, fully, mentally understands how it works, it must have come from somewhere.

I know it works for many people, it works. It must have come from that depth, and those things have no side effects. They are not, they are harmless, they work, but not the same as conventional medicine, which is mind-created.

They say, let's fight that, let's eliminate that, fight that, get rid of that, get rid of viruses. And then, after a while, they come back. So as you probably know by now, here, in most workshops you learn many things.

It is not a workshop anyway, but in most workshops you learn many things, they tell you beforehand, you can read the leaflet and say, you will learn six ways of achieving that, five ways of overcoming that, ten techniques for that. And here, you don't, there's only one thing here, and all the words are really all about one thing, not, you can't even call it a thing, it points all to that state of consciousness. It not only points, and that's a good thing, if it were only pointing, it would be frustrating.

If it were only talking about, it would be frustrating. It actually is a direct expression already of that state of consciousness, our gathering, is an expression. So the state which we could call thoughtless awareness, presence, whatever, labeled you want to

use, whatever pointer, arises in you.

And here it is a shared arising. Now this is not an experience. It could be confused by the mind with, you've come here to have an experience.

But an experience doesn't really last. It comes and then it's gone. But the arising of that is not something that comes and goes, or that can be obscured.

It's a dimension that actually, although I sometimes call it a new state of consciousness, the strange thing is, that dimension has always been there in you, unrecognized. It's only new in the sense that now you know it. It always will be there.

It's the timeless dimension of consciousness, of pure consciousness, unconditioned consciousness. It's always been there. So it's not an experience, something that you suddenly know that's always been there, but now you know it.

Of course it's not an experience, it was always there, it will always be there. So it goes beyond, far beyond having a spiritual experience, because there are still people looking for spiritual experience. That can be a great distraction.

And some people have read books about spiritual experiences and have read about fireworks that people experience, inner fireworks. I suddenly had an explosion of incredible lights and colors and everything went up. And then the next morning, I had breakfast.

Not to deny that there can be beautiful experiences. Life is full of beautiful, walking around nature is a beautiful experience, and so certain inner experiences can be very beautiful too. But they are experiences, they are things that arise in consciousness.

Objects of consciousness, we don't deny them, they are wonderful. And some experiences are actually helpful. They point, they take you beyond the experience so you realize something, the vastness in which the experience happens as yourself.

So spiritual experiences are fine, but I've met people who've told me, I've had such wonderful experiences and I can't get them back now. And now they're looking, they're missing the vital thing, the easy thing, because they're looking to recapture an experience they once had. And so, recently somebody wrote a book, I don't know whether it's good or bad, but the title is nice.

After the Ecstasy, the Laundry. Talking about spiritual experiences and everyday life, that it always comes to an end. And there's the laundry again, I have to do the laundry.

And so this experience is the ups and downs. So this is the arising, it's sometimes called, of who you truly are underneath images, underneath self-concepts and self-images based on me and my history and me and my story. Who is the being underneath?

But there's no answer through concepts because that's another thought. There's no real answer through thought or words to that question. The question creates an opening.

In some spiritual traditions, that is the spiritual practice, who am I? And people ask themselves constantly, who am I? Who am I?

And the answer is there when you've asked it so many times that the mind subsides after you've asked it. And there's simply a spaciousness, a spacious sense of presence. That's the opening.

Who am I? No answer. And since this is emerging in you and you fluctuate between mind and going beyond, when you're back in mind, you're no longer quite sure who you are.

The mind structures have become a little loosened. They're not as rigid as before where you actually thought you knew who you are. And I often meet people now who tell me, I don't know who I am anymore.

What's happening to me? That's wonderful if you don't know who you are anymore. That deeply entrenched mental image of me has become shaky.

And you see it's unreality. But then where do you go from there? Then the mind looks for some alternative answer to who I am.

And sometimes it takes refuge in some new belief. It sometimes takes refuge. It uses, although it's more difficult, it's almost like becoming a religion, but it's more difficult to do it with a simple teaching like this.

But the mind can still use that. And I've seen it. People who listen to the pointers and what they hear is, you are consciousness itself.

You are awareness. The essence of who you are is consciousness. And then they start saying it.

Okay, I've got it. Now I understand. I'm consciousness.

But it's only the mind that says, because to a limited extent the mind can say, yeah, I understand that. That makes sense to me. I am consciousness.

I'm not the objects that arise in consciousness. I'm consciousness itself. That makes sense.

And then you talk about it and you can repeat it. And for a while you feel better because it's like you've just converted to Buddhism or to Christianity. And the first period when you've just converted to some new belief, it feels good.

You now feel you know the truth. But it's still on the level of mind. And you will know it

because when somebody argues with the fact that you are consciousness, you get angry or upset.

And when you get home, you still shout at your wife. So if nothing changes in the way in which you interact with the world, with nature, with other human beings, and you simply repeat, I'm consciousness, but nothing has changed. An extreme way of putting it is you speak of the non-duality and you can even be very good at arguing.

You have mastered the terminology of a new belief system. There are even some teachers who have mastered the terminology. They can defeat anybody in argument.

And then they go home and beat up their wife. An extreme way of putting it. The old unconsciousness is still there.

But here this is not likely to happen. Not that anybody would beat up their wives or their husbands. So catch yourself and recognize within yourself the state of awareness when you're walking through nature.

As you sit here, sometimes simple state of open, alert presence. Relaxed alertness. The entire being is alert.

An alertness throughout. That's the state of presence. Can one live in that state?

Yes. The intensity may vary. Sometimes there's an intensity and sometimes it's just there in the background.

That happens. But it's always there. And if occasionally it gets obscured by mental noise, it doesn't matter that much either.

And if occasionally you take your mind seriously again, which simply means you believe in what the mind is saying totally, you become identified with thought completely, then the mind is again a serious matter. And after a little while, through the suffering and the unhappiness that you then feel, you get woken up again. A little alarm clock goes, oh, I'm unhappy.

What happened? I lost the now. I got back, drawn back into mental noise.

So there's back and forth. And when you come out of mind identification again, there's a tendency for the mind, when you've suddenly recognized that you've been lost in mind for a while, that recognition means, of course, there's the arising of presence. But then there's a possibility that at that moment the mind will come in again and say, you see, you can't do it.

You're never present. Which isn't true, because the moment you recognize that you have not been present, you are present. That's all that's needed.

It's more important how often you step out of mind identification into presence than how long you can be present. Doesn't matter. It's timeless anyway.

So that's the all, what we ever talk about here. There's only one thing here. Now, everything in your life, the things that happen in your life or the things that don't happen in your life, of course, they are important.

Your environment, where you live, relationships, work situation, money situation, health situation, they're all important, but they're only relatively important. They have a relative importance. They all come and go.

There's only one thing that is absolute, and that is knowing who you are. And then you recognize the relativity of everything else in your life. That yes, you give it attention.

Yes, you pay attention to your form identity as you move through this existence, as this form, there is a form identity. This is your position in relation to other people. So you take care of that.

Honor your form identity. You may be a mother. You may be a father.

That's part of your form identity. Your job or the fact that you don't have a job may be form identity. And yet, not losing yourself and believing that there's anything there that is of absolute importance.

The only thing of absolute importance is knowing who you are beyond form. Once you know that, you recognize the relativity of everything else. And when you recognize the relativity of everything else, it becomes so much easier.

It doesn't matter that much. You honor it, but it no longer matters as if it were absolutely important. And this is the great sense of freedom.

A playfulness comes into your life. You go about your business or whatever you have to do with a playfulness. And you may actually put a lot of energy into it.

And yet, it is not the desperate kind of energy that is there when you don't know who you are. And you are looking for an enhanced sense of self through the result that you want to achieve to whatever you are doing. It means I'm looking for myself through future, through what I want to achieve.

And then you believe it absolutely matters. And if you don't get it, it's pain. It's great suffering.

So the rest of your life, our gathering does not really address that level of existence. And yet, it also becomes transformed through this inner shift. And of course, your relationships become transformed.

The ways in which you deal with situations becomes transformed. Everything happens within the spaciousness of being. And that's an amazing thing when you notice that in relationships, when you give space or spaciousness to every relationship, which simply means to be in a state of thoughtless awareness when you are with someone.

Not continuously, of course, but it is there. And that begins with the shortest relationship possible, buying something in a shop. The moment of interaction when you are looking at the other human being, and maybe you can't really measure it in time.

For two or three seconds, there's simply a spaciousness while you buy the item. Not a self-conscious thing like, I'm going to heal you or something like that. Then you have another identity in the head.

I'm the healer and I'm going to heal the world. Of course, you're going to heal the world, but not if you're stuck in the identity of a healer and I have to heal the world. Where's the next person I can heal?

Sorry, I don't want to offend anybody's identity. So it's not that you want anything to happen. It's being there as a spacious presence.

And so for two or three seconds, there's this thoughtless just beingness. So this being is fully honored. This moment is fully honored.

When you don't honor this moment, which is the spaciousness of now, it becomes a means to an end. If this moment becomes a means to an end, the human being that is there in front of you at this moment, you will make that person into a means to an end because you want something through or from him or her. And if you're going to a shop to buy something, what you want is you want to get it over with.

And this human being is just a slight delays you for a few seconds in your attempt to get to the next moment. That's his or her importance to you. He's delaying you because you're on your way to the next moment.

Let's get you over with as quickly as possible. And that's the arising of spaciousness in relationships. Now, of course, one could say everything is relationship when you're walking through nature.

You have a relationship with a tree. And again, it's vital there to have that spaciousness. And it's easier to have it there than to have that spaciousness when you relate with humans.

That's why I left it for a while before addressing humans because humans are difficult, more difficult to sustain the spaciousness because a lot of mind continuously comes at you, mental noise and non-spaciousness, challenging you to join them on that level of existence of mind. Come and interact with me on the mind level. So you bring in the

spaciousness.

Just somebody, just when you say good morning to somebody, good morning, two or three seconds of just space. That's all. And then you'd speak.

But the space is there. And once it's there at the beginning of the interaction, it may be possible for the space to be there in the background, even as you speak. And as you speak, this is a great challenge, speaking with humans.

Because you get drawn into mind very easily, mind streams, and you can observe it in the restaurant. I haven't been there for a while, but when people speak, even here, you can still look sometimes, not last night, but you can observe how one easily gets into a mind stream. And then the sense of spaciousness underneath the words is lost.

And then your two minds are interacting, not really two beings. The being is obscured by mental noise. And when two minds are interacting, it won't be long before some problem or drama arises between these two minds.

Because really, that's how minds function. They get stronger through some drama. If somebody can disagree with me, you notice the intensification of mind that comes with that.

So, good morning, good morning, and then just nothing. Just allow this space. I mean, nobody's that much in a hurry that they can't allow three seconds after good morning, just speak.

And once you speak, a mind stream arises, and then step back. Once you have said what you have to say, step back from the mind stream into spacious presence again. Otherwise, one mind stream will lead to another mind stream, and another, and another, and go on, and you may be in for the whole day, for 15 hours, caught in mind streams.

And there's not a single gap. You just finish talking to one person, you pick up the phone and talk to another, and then somebody comes into the room, and when there's nobody there, it goes on in your head. No space, no space.

So, be alert, especially as you interact, so that you don't get dragged along in a mind stream. Always step back out of, you've said what you have to say, step back into spaciousness. And it may not last long, even if it's two seconds, it's fine, and then perhaps you have to say more, but the more spaciousness there is, the more powerful, alive, new is even what comes through your mind.

You saw it yesterday, when I repeated something that I had said before, from memory, and it had no longer the aliveness to it. It was just memory. There was perhaps interesting, when the mind can say, oh, that's an interesting thought, but it no longer had the aliveness of words or thoughts that come out of the state of presence, out of the

spaciousness, that's the qualitative difference.

So, your interactions with other human beings, this qualitative difference will come in, an enormous qualitative difference in your relationships, when there is space. So, short relationships, and of course, long relationships, partners, family, to bring in a sense of space there. If both partners do it, it's fine.

You don't have to, it's not a thing like, you say, okay, every evening, between 6 and 6.30, we are going to bring in space. Then it's just a compartment. It's in between all the everyday things, spaciousness arises, in between, just not as a separate activity.

So, it's the simple ability to be with someone, and often it implies that you're listening. This listening could actually be used as a synonym for the state of presence. One could say the state of presence is a state of alert attention, as if you were listening, even if nothing is being said.

You know the state of listening is that, if it were so quiet here, and you were listening to the faintest noises that arise, you would have to be very alert. And you can sense how much space there is around that bird, which is awareness. It arises within the field of awareness.

Jesus said, be like a servant waiting for the return of the master. He doesn't know at what time the master is going to come, so he needs to be awake, he needs to be alert, he needs to be present, because the master could come in at any moment, and the master is very quiet. You may not even notice the master coming in, and this is simply a parable.

He's trying to point to that state of consciousness, of alert presence, the state of wakefulness. So what would your state be if you were alone in a house at night, just listening, just there may be a slight noise of somebody coming in. Just simple alert presence.

Space. In some people that arises accidentally when they're in a very dangerous situation, that requires total alertness. Even fear doesn't work anymore, and there's just that.

And then action arises. If action comes out of that state, it's totally right for that moment. And that is the state that the Zen master spoke about, that I have mentioned before to some of you.

The Zen master who became famous because he never explained what the meaning of Zen is, when they asked him, what is Zen, can you explain what it means? And he became famous because his only explanation of the meaning of Zen, which is the state of consciousness, was, what is Zen? That's what he did, with his huge bulging eyes.

And he looked so fierce that some people became frightened. But underneath the fierceness, there was enormous gentleness, which you can see in some drawings of Zen masters' fierceness. Because, and this is interesting, the state of presence is both gentle and fierce.

And it seems these are two irreconcilable qualities, and yet it has both. It is gentle and yet it has a great fierceness to it. Enormous intensity, but gentle.

So that was the famous Zen master who would simply raise his finger. And a few people got it. He just looked at you.

Then there was a boy in the monastery. Some of these monasteries had young children who perhaps had no parents anymore attached to it. And this 12-year-old boy would often imitate the Zen master when visitors came.

And visitors were discussing the meaning of Zen. The boy would raise his finger because he thought, if the master does it, it must be the meaning of Zen. And everybody got upset with the boy because he didn't respect, seems to be lack of respect for the master.

And one day, the boy was in the kitchen and there were some visitors and he was doing it again. The master crept up from behind. He was in the kitchen.

The boy didn't see him. And then, as the story goes, the master got the chopping knife and cut off the boy's finger. And the boy started screaming and ran out of the kitchen.

And when he was just going through the door, the master shouted, Stop! Turn around! And the boy stopped and looked at the master.

And the master went. And as the story goes, at that moment, the boy became enlightened. An emergency situation.

The approach towards the transformation of consciousness can vary according to one's predisposition. So there's a Japanese way of approaching it, and then there's a Chinese way, and there's an Indian way, and there's a European way. The essence is the same.

The approach may be different. Japanese like to do things in an uncompromising way. And sometimes it works.

So listen. When listening to someone, truly listening, if you can truly listen, it implies there is the spaciousness there, because otherwise you're not really listening to another person, let alone listening to the subtle noises in nature. So there needs to be the spaciousness so that you can listen.

The only qualification really you need if you want to be a successful therapist is the ability to listen. You don't really need that much knowledge. And some of the great therapists who are truly effective, after a while, they use less and less of what they

know.

And after a few years, they're simply there in a state of listening. And everything else arises then out of that. Words may come out of it.

Words may come out of the person you're sitting with. That is true healing, but not in the sense that I am healing you. The totality of the situation is a healing situation.

So the ability to listen is the most wonderful thing. And what you're listening to may well be a drama in the head. It may well be somebody identified with their mind image of who they are and telling you about their story.

And there's simply the spaciousness in which this human being is allowed to be. Spacious listening. And then, if there's truly spacious listening, you're not reinforcing the mental noise.

And after a while, it subsides. And then true answers come. Then true realization comes out of that.

You're not looking for anything different. And when you're truly listening, this moment is good enough. You're not attempting to change anybody.

And then change happens. That was recognized by one famous psychotherapist, Carl Rogers, who taught simply to be in a state of unconditional acceptance of the other person. In a state of non-judgment.

And what does that mean? It means the mind is still as you listen. Every thought you have about that person would be some kind of judgment.

The mind is still. And then change happens. Then transformation happens.

But it's not engineered by me. How do I know what is the answer in this situation? It's the most wonderful thing.

Occasionally, I still see people, individual people, not very often. But often they come with problems, and some have huge problems. Somebody last week came with an enormous tragedy that happened in their lives.

Their son killed four people. And so, what is the answer to be with someone like that? It would be absurd for me to believe that I have an answer for you.

I'm going to tell you I have no answer. It is to become at ease with the state of not knowing. Because that's really another aspect of that.

Not to feel I should know. The mind, this takes you beyond mind, because the mind is trying to figure something out. And the mind is never at ease with the state of not

knowing.

So when you can be at ease with that state, you're already beyond mind. And what is left is the state of openness in which you don't know, and no longer think that you should know. Because if you don't know but think that you should know, then it doesn't quite work yet.

You're stuck in between two, I don't know, and this is the most beautiful state of openness when you can be at ease with not knowing. And what else can, there's simply, we meet within that spacious presence. They speak, I listen.

He or she speaks, there's listening, receptive listening, openness. And there's silence, perhaps, between the words. At some point, usually, some words come, you find yourself speaking, and they come out of presence.

It may be that no words come. It can be fine too. It may be that all the words and all the answers, if there are answers on the level of words, and often there are no answers on the level of words, but if there are, they may come from the other person.

All you do is you hold this space. And that sounds as if you were doing something, but that's because of language. It really is the absence of doing anything on your part.

Holding the space is not really a doing. You are the space, the spaciousness. Everything that needs to happen happens out of that.

So that's the wonderful thing of becoming comfortable with not knowing, unknowing. And that may also be the case with certain things in your life situation. And you've been trying to figure out what to do about your life situation, and you don't know.

I could do this, but then on the other hand, what if I do that? Decision, what decision am I going to take? Step into not knowing.

Be comfortable with not knowing. Well, how long am I going to not know? I don't know.

I don't know. As far as external activities are concerned, my life situation for quite a few years was I wasn't doing very much externally. Occasionally, people came to see me.

Occasionally, I had little groups here and there. But I just didn't really know what my function was beyond seeing a few people here and there. What is my function in this world?

Is that all? There was peace inside, but I just didn't know whether that was it or whether there would be more. I didn't even try to figure it out because I knew I can't figure this out.

And so after a few years, one morning I woke up and I knew what to do. I have to move. I

have to move to the West Coast of North America.

Why? And when I told people, it doesn't make sense. What?

And my mother, who thought I was mad already. Whether you haven't got a job and you just want to go, it doesn't make sense. And I just went.

It was the knowing that came out of the state of not knowing was complete. Occasionally, the mind says, I wonder what I'm doing here. It turned out that I had to write the book on the West Coast.

I couldn't have written it in England. For some reason, the energy field didn't draw it out of me. It took several weeks on the West Coast, maybe six, before the book started to happen.

And then it happened. And then I went back to England for a little while and the writing stopped immediately. Then I went back to the West Coast and the flow was there again.

And then, not until then, I realized, oh, now I understand why I had to move. But that was not decision-making. It was ready-made, a ready-made decision.

It's already there. And that can come out if you become comfortable with not knowing and don't put a time limit on it. Okay, I will give it four weeks of not knowing, but then, if I'm no answer by then...

Occasionally, people have called me patient, and I never understood that. I'm not patient. I never even thought of being patient.

When you're present with what is, you don't have to be patient, because patience is an attempt to be present, but you're not quite making it. And you know it when you say, okay, I'll be patient. There's a veiled threat underneath that when you say that.

All right. The sun is back. The rain was beautiful, too.

Before we break for lunch, I'd like to listen. Let's listen to a song. I like a song very much by Keatana, Who You Really Are.

Is it number six, track six?

[Speaker 2] (1:27:31 - 1:28:18)

More to life than the body can sense, than the mind can conclude from experience. Because who we are begin with breath, depend on form, or end with death. Strip away these roles, these names, and tell me what remains.

[Speaker 3] (1:28:21 - 1:28:30)

Who you really are. Who you really are.

[Speaker 2] (1:28:41 - 1:31:54)

Measure success by the things we accrue, or the bonds that we form, or the deeds we do. But these too shall pass. It's hard as we try to hold on to the form.

The form will die. But inherent in this dance of form is the chance to see what's yet unborn. A choice to throw this chance away, be caught up in the play of who we think we are.

Who we think we are. This is your lifetime. It could end at any time.

Where is your attention? Where is your prayer? Where is your song?

In your fortunate life comes a call to be free from the cycle of bondage and misidentity. To wake from the dream and finally realize the truth of one's being before the body dies. So before the final scene is passed, see the screen on which it's cast.

See what's seen, this me and you, and then you will see who. Who you really are.

[Speaker 3] (1:31:57 - 1:32:12)

Who you really are. Who you really are. Who we really are.

[Speaker 1] (1:32:40 - 1:32:48)

Thank you. You may want to just sit for a few minutes in silence.